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Sen. Sanborn's drug treatment courts legislation signed into law

LANSING – A package of bills signed into law Wednesday allows judges to place individuals who abuse or are dependent on drugs or alcohol into drug treatment courts or juvenile drug treatment courts, said Sen. Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond Township.

“Drug treatment courts have been identified as important and necessary reform for our criminal justice system,” said Sanborn. “The package will allow individuals who have an addiction to drugs and alcohol to receive the help they need and become law abiding citizens.”

Sanborn sponsored a bill in the package to give first-time drug offenders who admit guilt or are found to be guilty a chance to seek help for their problems prior to sentencing. The bill provides the court with the flexibility to discharge the person and dismiss the charges upon fulfillment of the terms and conditions of their probation.

Public Act 225 also amends the Public Health Code and requires the Record and Identifications Division of the Department of State Police to retain a nonpublic record of arrests, discharges or dismissals under the new law.

Individuals admitted to the new drug treatment courts could not be violent offenders or have been charged with weapon's violations. Individuals who pose a substantial risk to the public shall not be admitted into the programs.

The drug treatment court package was supported by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, Michigan Association of Drug Court Professional, Licensed Substance Abuse Organizations and the State Bar of Michigan.

Editor's note: A downloadable photograph of Sen. Alan Sanborn is available on the Senate Majority Photowire located at: www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire.

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